Reasons for Flexible Changes to Standards, Policies and Guidelines

Twenty-four standards and 3 guidelines were created or updated in 2004. Standards exist to ensure compatibility across state government. Standards also help optimize expenditures on technology. Standards and guidelines are first and foremost a communication tool. Along with "future state" documentation they describe to vendors and agency IT staff the expectations with regard to technology deployment. It is important to keep this documentation current. The process for updating standards must be flexible.

- If IT staff feel that putting something in a standard means that it will rarely change, they will be reluctant to create standards and standards will not be used as a primary means of communicating expectations.
- Technology changes at a fairly rapid rate. It is difficult to predict the market more than 6 months in advance but we don't want this to prevent us from making decisions and moving forward.
- New products appear or old products disappear. IT companies merge or go out of business. This changes the business assumptions that were used to select a standard and may require a change in direction.
- Once a standard is established, feedback may indicate that the wording of the standard is unclear. If the standard establishes a process, continuous improvement of the process may warrant changes.
- Business requirements of a single agency may drive creation of a standard that others with less pressing needs will eventually follow. The lead agency may have time constraints that require expediting the standards process. The other agencies may find changes are needed to the standard once they get further experience with the technology.
- If an agency submits an exception request, and it is determined that the standard should be changed for all agencies rather than approve exception requests, then the change should be handled as expeditiously as possible.
- The high volume of standards is not conducive to a long, rigid approval process. The enterprise architecture process promotes stakeholder involvement in the development process with a fairly straightforward review and approval process. Enterprise architecture also encourages continuous change and updating.

Examples of standards that may change frequently:

Following are examples of standards that may change frequently because they include lists of tools or products that have been approved for use. The intent is to share information and training across agencies. It should be an easy process for an agency to get a tool added to the list if they can show that it could provide a benefit for state government.

Imaging Standard, November 3, 2004

TOOLS

0. Verity Teleform
0. FileNet Capture
0. Open Scan – Mail Scan
0. Wappapello
0. Neuroscanner – specific to the Neurolog brand scanner

Application Development Tools/Languages, October 8, 2004

APPLICATION DEVELOPMENT TOOLS/LANGUAGES LIST

* Indicates the direction the enterprise is heading or is a preferred tool/language

Direction *	Tool/Language	Additional Information
Design Tools - Database and UML Modeling		
	IBM Rational Rose	
	Oracle Designer	
	Sybase PowerDesigner	
Development Tools/Platforms		
*	Allround Automations PL/SQL Developer	Developing Oracle RDBMS objects
*	Altova XMLSPY	XML
*	ESRI	GIS
*	IBM WSAD/Eclipse	Java
*	Java	J2EE, J2SE, J2ME
*	Macromedia Dreamweaver/Homesite	Web site/page design and development
*	Microsoft.NET	Microsoft Visual Studio .NET, .NET Framework, ASP.NET
	Microsoft Access	End user database tool
	Oracle JDeveloper	Java
	SeeBeyond	Message translation and queuing and HIPAA Translator
	Sybase PowerBuilder	Client/Server

Examples of Standards

Following are excerpts from various types of standards and guidelines developed through the enterprise architecture process. During the standard setting process, standards are not distinctly identified as product, process or policy standards. The standards stem from architecture principles and the future state direction. The full standards and guidelines can be found at http://www.state.nd.us/ea/standards/.

Examples of product or specification standards used to ensure compatibility and consistency:

Databases Standard, January 28, 2004

- All new applications shall use databases specified in the "Approved Databases" list. New databases will be presented to the Data/Information domain team for review and evaluation. The list will be updated accordingly.

- If data for new applications require features of an Enterprise Database, the application must utilize an Enterprise Database. Otherwise, an approved Non-Enterprise Database may be utilized.

SUPPORTED DATABASE LIST

Database	Data Base Type	Enterprise Database
Oracle	RDBMS	Y
MS SQL Server	RDBMS	Y
IBM DB2 UDB	RDBMS	Y
MS Access	RDBMS	N

Groupware Standards, January 31, 2004

ENTERPRISE GROUPWARE SYSTEM COMPONENTS

Email, Calendaring/Scheduling

- Microsoft Outlook / Exchange
- Lotus Notes / Domino – *(End-of-life: June 2007)*
- POP3/SMTP service

Faxing

- Captaris RightFax

Instant Messaging, Presence Detection, Desktop Audio/Video Conferencing, Chat Services, White-boarding, File Transfer, Application Sharing

- Microsoft NetMeeting
- Public MSN, Yahoo Messenger, and AIM
- Evaluate corporate solution – *(Projected completion: June 2004)*

Collaborative Applications and Team-rooms

- Evaluate corporate solution – *(Projected completion: December 2004*

Video Conference Standards, September 9, 1998

To assure interoperability within and outside North Dakota, agencies and institutions shall utilize equipment conforming to the ITU-H.320 or ITU-H.323 videoconferencing standard.
(Copies of these standards may be obtained from ITU - www.itu.ch)

Overall	H.320 and H.323
Data Sharing	T.120
Bandwidth:	

- Minimum – T-1 connection (The minimum bandwidth provided on the State ATM network for individual locations.)
- General Videoconferences – 384K (The standard bandwidth for meeting and general videoconferences (not distance learning).)
- Distance Education – 768K (The standard bandwidth for K-12/IVN distance learning type video conferencing.)

ITD and IVN certified end point video equipment.

- Polycom SP
- Polycom FX
- Polycom VS4000
- PictureTel 970

Examples of process standards used to communicate expectations for consistent methods to ensure statewide service levels are met:

Anti-Virus Standard, February 10, 2004

- Anti-virus software shall be installed and active on all servers and workstations and virus signature files shall be kept current.
- All incoming files will be scanned for viruses. If a file contains a virus and cannot be cleaned, the file will be deleted.
- All files will be scanned on a weekly basis.
- Log files will be reviewed on a regular basis.
- All email entering the state's network from the Internet will be scanned to detect infected or purposely blocked attachments. All emails with infected or purposely blocked attachments will be dropped. They will not be delivered to the recipient.

Microsoft Critical Updates Standard, March 15, 2004

- Microsoft critical updates will be installed within 30 days on all workstations running a Microsoft Operating System.

Examples of policy standards used to ensure consistent implementation of policy decisions:

E-Services Privacy Standard, March 15, 2004

0. All e-services accepting personally identifiable information shall provide privacy policy information.

1. Privacy policies shall state:
    - What and why personally identifiable information is collected.
    - How the information will be used and under what circumstances it will be released, or if applicable the specific laws providing that the information is confidential.
    - Choices available to the individual for reviewing and correcting customer submitted information.
    - Contact information.
    - If social security numbers are collected, notification as required in the Privacy Act of 1974 must be given.
    - Reference to a security policy.
    - The web pages/applications or specific type of information/service areas covered by this policy.
    - If and how cookies are used.

Accessible Web Development Standard, November 3, 2004

- Web sites shall validate to the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) specification for Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0 (WCAG) priority 2.

    Exception:
    - Internal Web sites deployed before July 1, 2004 until it undergoes major enhancements or otherwise challenged by an employee.
    - Technical tools or applications used by a limited number of internal staff for administrative purposes.

Examples of guidelines or best practices developed to assist agencies in deploying technology:

Web Development Best Practices, February 10, 2004

Page Content

0. HTML pages over 80kb should be avoided.
1. Information about file size should be provided when offering a large file download.
2. Web sites should be tested in multi-browser/version environments.
3. HTML pages should include keyword and content-language meta tags/information.
4. Proprietary document formats such as Microsoft or Lotus are not universally friendly and should be converted to formats such as Rich Text or HTML.
5. When designing a page that is lengthy (like FAQs, Glossary, List of Terms) provide an alphabetical/ navigational index at the top of the page that allows users to jump to a section of the page. Also, provide "back to top" links consistently throughout the length of the page.

    Links to the privacy policy, security policy, and contact information should be included in the footer of every page.

<more>